

and say, no, we are not going to do it. Senator Withem says that we made some decisions in 994 last year and we chose not to fund some of those decisions this year. We never did intend...

SENATOR MARSH: One minute.

SENATOR VICKERS: Thank you, Madam President. We never did intend to put more dollars in for the 1,080 hours because many, many school districts across this state already were offering more than that, so why should we pay something for something that isn't going to cost them any more? The simple fact of the matter is, if we are going to be competing in a global economy, we are going to have to talk about maybe a little more instructional time in schools and that is what 1,080 instructional hours said. There is nothing wrong with that decision last year. There is nothing wrong with it yet this year and based on the fact that many, many school districts, most of them have already set their schedules, set their times for next year, it would be totally inappropriate for this Legislature to back off of it and say, no, we didn't mean it. I urge you to reject the Withem amendment. Thank you, Madam President.

SENATOR MARSH: Thank you, Senator Vickers. Senator Haberman.

SENATOR HABERMAN: Madam President and members of the Legislature, a question of Senator Withem, please.

SENATOR MARSH: Senator Withem, will you respond to a question?

SENATOR WITHEM: Certainly will.

SENATOR HABERMAN: Senator Withem, does your amendment define school months as 20 days and school weeks as 5 days?

SENATOR WITHEM: Yes, I believe it does.

SENATOR HABERMAN: Well, then I have a question. What is going to happen to part days and part weeks? For example, what if Christmas starts on a Wednesday? How can it conform to your amendment by you defining 20 days and 5 days and making it so strict?